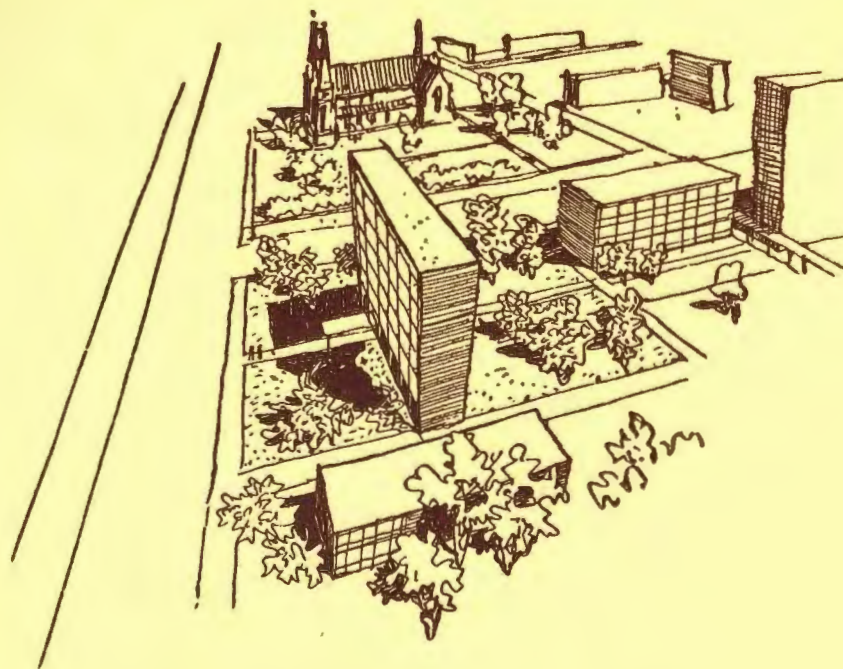


COMMUNITY PLANNING ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

COMMUNITY PLANNING REVIEW



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REVUE CANADIENNE D'URBANISME

L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE D'URBANISME

COMMUNITY PLANNING REVIEW

REVUE CANADIENNE D'URBANISME

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**SHADED CARPARK, FOOTWALK AND SHOP FRONTS
IN GREAT GEORGE STREET, CHARLOTTETOWN**

"There is a deadly tendency for the tourist trade to mould every community into the likeness of every other. . . That tendency towards uniformity must be resisted. The quality of service and comfort demanded by visitors and our own people must be maintained, but not at the expense of substituting standardized 'tourist attractions' for our own slowly developed characteristics."

—Charlottetown *Guardian*

**TROTTOIRS ET MAGASINS LE LONG DE LA RUE
GREAT GEORGE, A CHARLOTTETOWN**

"Une tendance malheureuse de l'industrie touristique la porte à façonner toutes les villes selon le même moule. . . Il faut faire échec à cette tendance vers l'uniformité. Il faut sauvegarder le service et le confort qu'exigent nos visiteurs, mais il n'est pas nécessaire, pour cela, de mettre de côté nos caractéristiques lentement acquises au bénéfice d'attractions touristiques uniformes."

—Le *Guardian* de Charlottetown

EDITORIAL NOTE

Perhaps few things so clearly impress the traveller across Canada as the variation in climate and natural scenery that he finds here. When he turns to look at the man-made views, on the other hand, he may notice a remarkable sameness in many recently built parts. He may find no clue in the *look* of an individual house or food market or post office or branch bank, taken later from his snapshot album, to suggest whether it stood in Nova Scotia or Alberta. There are obvious reasons why building skills in a new land must be given time to become adapted to varying and unfamiliar conditions. The authors in this issue, and the local units in this Association, may both hope to do something towards accelerating that adaptation.

In Quebec, where agricultural settlement and the urban life it could support have been developing for three centuries, quite specific traditions of building came into being. The compelling requirement of today is to establish modern industry in Quebec towns without doing violence to their individuality; that is to be the theme of the Association's meeting at St. Jean this month.

In the Atlantic provinces, with their different means of livelihood, to introduce new methods of work is to pose other problems of adjustment. The Deputy Minister of Fisheries of Canada raised some of these in a paper read at Charlottetown, and printed herein. In other places and in other ways, the realities of site and surroundings are being taken into account. West Coast architects are exploiting available timber and moderate weather with reduced sunlight, to design houses with wide spans and openings—buildings with a rhythm as distinctive in Canada as any spoken dialect could be. The Building Research station at Saskatoon and the Planning Research Centre at Winnipeg are collecting basic data which may yet find voice in the form of prairie structures. Another essay points to the value of studying local landmarks and their histories in school, as the best foundation for more mature judgment of the proposed alongside the existing. A distinguished Ottawa architect here outlines the kinds of space and building shape he believes the Capital will need. The dean of Dutch architects, W. M. Dudok, gives us in broader strokes his general views of city-form as expression of citizen-life.

How to place new forms within the familiar scene was an easier issue to deal with when new projects were

initiated by local people, who *were* familiar with the possible sites and steeped in the lore belonging to each. The difference now is that sponsorship of new buildings—dwellings as well as work-places—is so often assumed by remote governments and corporations, who have their own central technical staffs. The current decentralization of large factory units into the smaller towns should be paralleled by the migration of designers to the scenes of their work.

A glance at the amounts spent on construction by national enterprises and the national government will show how far they outweigh the sums so spent by local groups of people. The federal authorities alone will alienate from our purse this year a fortnight's wages for their projects—far more building money than we shall have left for domestic improvements of our own choosing. Thus we see housing going up in Dartmouth to designs made in Ottawa, towns built in New Quebec by men answerable to Pittsburgh, the sudden expansion of Perth or Oakville at the behest of outsiders, the fashioning of empires in Alberta by men from Texas or New Jersey. Here is a reason for man-made uniformity across the continent, a force running against the growth of sound regional customs in building. If the central problem of our urban design is to produce a characteristic landscape, arising naturally from the distinctive qualities of the site and its inhabitants, then we may slow the progress of urban design by placing so much of our building funds in absentee hands. If the sponsors and designers of neighbouring Main Street projects live a thousand miles apart, their works are hardly likely to consort with each other or with the rest of our town.

Yet in a sparsely settled but highly mechanized land such central sources of capital and initiative are needed. The problem is to apply that accumulated drive with sympathy for local intention and custom and feeling, to guide the power of large collective bodies with the skills and memories of the community where that power is to be felt. This Association and others drew the problem to the attention of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences; some solutions were suggested in our last number. But the issue deserves prolonged attention, by architects and their corporate clients, as well as by local groups of laymen who hold in affectionate regard their own bailiwick.

Note de la Rédaction

Rien sans doute n'étonne autant le voyageur qui traverse le Canada que les changements qu'il observe dans le climat et les paysages naturels. D'autre part, s'il s'arrête aux ouvrages faits de main d'homme, il constatera la similitude remarquable de beaucoup de régions récemment construites. Plus tard, son album d'instantanés ne lui fournira probablement aucun moyen de savoir si telle maison, telle épicerie, tel bureau de poste ou telle succursale de banque ont été photographiés en Nouvelle-Ecosse ou en Alberta. Pour bien des raisons, il faut, dans un pays neuf, donner à l'art de la construction le temps de s'adapter à des conditions variables et inusitées. Les auteurs des articles de la présente livraison et les sections de notre Association doivent s'attendre à faire leur part en vue de hâter une telle mise au point.

Dans le Québec, où la vie rurale et la vie urbaine que la campagne a pu soutenir ont marché de pair depuis trois siècles, il s'est établi des traditions bien particulières en fait de construction. Le problème qui se pose aujourd'hui, c'est celui d'établir des industries modernes dans les villes du Québec sans nuire aux particularismes de ces villes. Ce sera le sujet qui sera étudié, ce mois-ci, lors de la réunion de notre Association, à Saint-Jean.

Quant aux provinces de l'Atlantique, où les moyens de subsistance diffèrent, vouloir y introduire de nouvelles méthodes de travail revient à susciter d'autres problèmes de mise au point. Le sous-ministre fédéral des Pêcheries a mentionné quelques-uns de ces problèmes au cours d'une causerie prononcée à Charlottetown et reproduite dans notre revue.

Dans la présente livraison, l'auteur d'un autre article insiste sur la valeur des études, à l'école, des limites de la localité et de tout ce qui s'y rattache dans le passé, études qui, selon lui, permettent de juger de façon plus sûre les projets actuels en fonction de ce qui existe déjà. Un architecte éminent d'Ottawa indique de quelle sorte d'espaces et d'édifices, à son avis, la capitale aura besoin à l'avenir. Le doyen des architectes hollandais, M. W.-M. Dudok, nous donne, ici même, ce que doit être, à son avis, l'apparence extérieure d'une ville comme moyen d'indiquer le mode de vie de ses habitants.

Insérer de nouvelles formes dans une architecture usuelle était une tâche beaucoup plus facile lorsque les nouvelles constructions avaient pour auteurs des personnes de chez nous qui *connaissaient* bien les emplacements

disponibles et la tradition attachée à chacun d'eux. Mais, de nos jours, ne sont-ce pas souvent des gouvernements ou des sociétés éloignées possédant leurs propres services centraux de techniciens qui prennent l'initiative de construire de nouvelles bâtisses—des habitations aussi bien que endroits destinés aux travailleurs. La décentralisation des usines en des villes plus petites rendra de plus en plus grave l'éloignement de ceux qui préparent les plans pour les bâtiments où doit s'exécuter le travail.

Un coup d'oeil jeté sur les sommes que dépensent les grandes entreprises et le gouvernement central pour la construction indique à quel point elles dépassent les montants qu'affectent à la même fin les groupements locaux.

Pour sa part, le gouvernement fédéral affectera à la construction, cette année, beaucoup plus de deniers obtenus de notre bourse qu'il ne nous aurait été possible d'en dépenser à l'égard des améliorations de notre choix. Voilà pourquoi la construction va de l'avant à Dartmouth, mais d'après des plans préparés à Ottawa; pourquoi des hommes comptables à Pittsburgh bâtissent des villes dans le Nouveau-Québec; pourquoi Perth et Oakville prennent une expansion soudaine sous la direction de gens de l'extérieur; et pourquoi des personnes venant du Texas ou du New-Jersey élaborent des empires en Alberta. Voilà pourquoi aussi l'oeuvre de l'homme à un caractère d'uniformité à travers le continent; c'est là la résistance que doivent vaincre ceux qui préconisent le progrès des saines traditions régionales.

Si nous tenons à ce que nos villes offrent un coup d'oeil caractéristique qui tienne autant des qualités particulières de leurs emplacements que de celles de leurs habitants, nous retarderons certes l'obtention d'une telle fin en confiant à des mains invisibles le soin d'affecter à la construction des montants aussi considérables. Si les architectes et ceux dont relèvent les entreprises mises en oeuvre, rue Principale, demeurent à des milliers de milles les uns des autres, il est peu probable que leurs travaux s'accordent les uns avec les autres ou entrent dans la composition du reste de notre ville.

Cependant, dans un pays peu densément peuplé où la machine tient une si haute place, il importe d'avoir de telles réserves centrales de capital et d'initiative. Le problème consiste à y recourir tout en tenant compte du sentiment des habitants et d'orienter le pouvoir des puissants organismes collectifs de telle sorte qu'ils tiennent compte du passé et des possibilités d'une localité. Notre Association et d'autres organismes ont porté cette question à l'attention de la Commission royale d'enquête sur l'avancement des lettres, arts et sciences; certaines solutions ont été proposées dans des articles précédents de la REVUE. Mais le problème mérite une attention constante de la part des architectes et des sociétés qui les emploient, ainsi que de la part des groupements locaux de profanes qui entretiennent une profonde affection à l'égard de leur paroisse.

Le sous-ministre fédéral des Pêcheries souligne quelques-uns des problèmes rencontrés en visant la mise en valeur des ressources des provinces de l'Atlantique. Les moyens de subsistance diffèrent, et les habitants ne peuvent pas toujours adopter des solutions simples en achevant une plus haute productivité. Cet extrait est tiré d'une causerie prononcée à Charlottetown devant la Division de l'Île du Prince Edouard de l'Association canadienne d'urbanisme.

DEVELOPMENT OF CANADA'S ATLANTIC PROVINCES

by Stewart Bates*

THE Atlantic Provinces have been a deep well of human resources from which the rest of Canada, and parts of the U.S.A. drew manpower—especially ambitious and able men. This movement away of large groups of men of initiative and training is still going on, helping to build industry elsewhere but always depriving these areas of some of their native abilities. The war and the post-war expansion of new industries in Canada has been more marked in some other provinces. Some groups in the east, pressing for greater decentralization of Canadian industry, have argued that the war plants which were later converted to peace production had been established mainly in other provinces and that they thereby secured long-run advantages over the Maritimes.

Traditionally the Atlantic provinces sold much of their fish, lumber, agricultural and mineral products in what is now called the sterling area. That whole area is now a more limited market, with many trade restrictions, and these may have proved relatively more harmful to these provinces than to the rest of Canada. It is not easy to gear local production to the dollar areas: you cannot overnight convert Newfoundland's salt fish exports bound for the Mediterranean into kinds of fish saleable in North America; nor can you find quick alternative outlets for Nova Scotia apples or New Brunswick pitprops. And so, while there has been a substantial increase in Maritime prosperity, some of the longer standing economic difficulties that have vexed many Royal Commissions have not been wholly removed.

DIFFICULTIES IN THE MARITIMES

It is not easy to plan a way out. Planning is difficult anywhere but perhaps more so in regions with the sort of resources our Atlantic provinces have. Perhaps the main trouble with planning on a national or international

scale is that the process requires certain redirections of ordinary actions of firms and governments. The economic system has to be required to do different things or new things. This always involves more regulating, more controls, more taxation, more governmental machinery. The 'mighty opposites' that constitute all life immediately come in, to play their conflicting parts. The very democratic institutions we may wish to preserve, and indeed improve by planning, may themselves be changed by our well-intentioned acts. The more we plan, the more we regulate and order: and the more we gradually change the basic way of life we cherish.

This is not necessarily a bad thing. Society is like the individual, in constant process of change, not just Being but Becoming. For us our end is known: but for society we work for a future none of us will see. So in planning the first step is not a step at all—it is to open our eyes, to see things as they are, and not as we would like them to be. If we wish to plan, the future has to be planned out of the present and the past, out of the present resources, out of the present pattern of human behaviour. In police states, dictators can perhaps go down into the turbulent arena of human affairs with iron: in our society it may have to be done with prayers in the beginning.

For those concerned with economics, it may seem sufficient to concentrate planning on material programs only—to stress economic development and economic welfare: good roads and schools, good sanitation, well equipped institutions and plants, a high physical standard of living. No one would deny the advantage of these. But perhaps all the world's troubles are not of economic origin—however elemental the economic ones may be.

Some world planners today have great designs for the filling of empty stomachs. First things come first and peoples will not live long on empty stomachs, it is true; but full stomachs alone do not guarantee individual happiness or national greatness. Man still does not live by bread alone—nor by bread and circuses. Good planning has to be more than a merely material program; it has to take account of other things: justice, freedom and the individual. That is why planning is so difficult

* Stewart Bates lectured in Economics at Dalhousie University, and was employed as Deputy Director-General of Economic Research in the former federal Department of Reconstruction and Supply, prior to his appointment as Deputy Minister of Fisheries. This address was prepared by him and delivered in his absence by the Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Fisheries, J. Watson MacNaught, M.P., at the annual (seafood) dinner of the Prince Edward Island Division of this Association in Charlottetown.

in our way of living; while it is apparently easy for a short time at least in a police state. I say "for a short time in a police state" for all experience shows that men will not finally surrender themselves to a standardized existence imposed from above, whatever vulgar Caesars try to rule the world. Most of our people want to sail to the port of their own desire, and our plans have to be made accordingly.

This is very much so in the Atlantic Provinces. Perhaps it is the sea that calls out the strong individualist qualities from those who have to struggle alone with her. Perhaps it is the nature of the Maritime resources, the traditional settlement in scattered villages, or the history of the people themselves; but the fact remains that the current of individualism runs strong and free. This asset may see a liability to those who would force development and industry into a single mould.

There is also a physical reality to be faced by economic reformers here. The so-called Maritime problem is not a single one in a more or less homogeneous area, as for example is wheat in Saskatchewan. This Atlantic region, though small, is diverse in character and resources. Even in fishing there are few similarities between Rustico (Prince Edward Island) and Bonavista in Newfoundland; or between Canso (Nova Scotia) and Grand Manan (New Brunswick). Each—and there are dozens like them—is almost a unique fishery, depending on different fish, different methods of catching and processing, and different markets. So also as between the main industries of the area; each industry and that area dependent on it, has its own peculiar features and problems. The Maritime problem is a series of area problems. For such a region there can be no simple overall blueprint for development.

Swordfishing boats in Cheticamp Harbour, Cape Breton Island

Photo N.F.B.



In the southern Prairies, on the contrary, a single piece of legislation—the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act (PFRA)—went far along the way to improve conditions: providing means of irrigation, movement of farmers out of submarginal areas, and the like. But none of the Atlantic provinces is a single-industry province. Each has many small industries of many sorts. Economic improvement is much more complex. The solution calls for a number of measures and plans, many of them small and detailed, designed to aid peculiar local conditions, and requiring careful co-ordination. This cannot be accomplished by any single piece of legislation, either federal or provincial, or both. The position is too complex for that. This is not to say that it is unmanageable, but no single simple plan is sufficient; and the task of the four provincial governments is often more complex than outsiders appreciate.

Consider for a moment our new province—Newfoundland—with some 1,300 shore communities, nearly all dependent on salted cod. Ponder the social and economic requirements involved in any kind of planning: transport and communications, the industrial development and concentration, the shift of people, the community services and public works. Obviously there will need to be a set of complicated programs that require the most careful co-ordination by industrial management and government together, taking into account the complicated social and historical features of the Island as a whole.

Thus we have to admit that most Maritime questions have to be solved on an *ad hoc* local basis. If it is possible

to state the Maritime problem simply, it might be put this way: it is the raising of industrial standards among the older firms and the encouragement of new firms with new standards, to make new products that can readily be sold in the dollar area if need be, to fashion new qualities and new varieties of goods and services. Quite largely this is the task of industrial management, rather than of government.

It may be true however, that much Maritime production come from small producers who are either not ready, or indeed not able, to make the industrial innovations that modern markets and modern fastidiousness seem to require. If so, these smaller producers may need encouragement, for the spirit of enterprise is the essential one for material progress. But basically the initiative must remain with the industries themselves because their problems are special ones, special in each local area. So the solutions probably have to be many; industry, governments both Federal and Provincial, and Associations like this one, have to work on many fronts—sometimes singly but usually collectively.

Because of the small scale of many Maritime operations there is a tendency for producers to refer to governments matters which industries in other provinces would usually handle on their own. Thus in other parts it is often possible for governments to concern themselves with the wider framework of industrial conditions, leaving individuals and private groups to manage the details of their own industrial life. This is less easy for Maritime governments.

Cod flakes are prominent at King's Cove, Bonavista South, Newfoundland

Photo N.F.B.



NEW EXPERIMENTS IN MARITIME PLANNING

To meet this kind of question and to try to find a co-ordinated approach to certain industrial problems, two experiments in economic planning have been launched in the Atlantic provinces in recent months; both are in the fishing industry, one in Newfoundland and one in Prince Edward Island. In each province a Fisheries Development Committee has been set up, on which there are senior representatives from the Federal and Provincial Governments of fishermen and of the fish trade. Each Committee is headed by the Chief Justice of the Province.

In each instance the Committee is charged with the formulation of a development program for the local fisheries. They are examining the fishery resources with a view towards a better use of those that are known, and the discovery and development of others presently unknown. They are asked to study the existing fishing methods and others that may be applicable to local conditions, and to examine existing methods of processing. These committees are intended to recommend a program for each Island capable of implementation by the Federal and Provincial Governments and by those engaged in the fishing industry. In other words, an attempt is being made to formulate a plan that can be acceptable to the governments and to the industry itself; and to formulate it in such a way that each party, within its own responsibilities, may carry out an agreed share of the overall scheme. The experiment is aimed at outlining on the

one side what the Federal and Provincial governments can do towards providing a good framework for the fishing industry, and on the other what the fishing industry itself can do towards working out the detailed industrial programs within that framework.

Both these Development Committees are now working on their reports and if successful their example may quite well form a pattern for the laying down of future programs in other industries, programs that require the coordinated and integrated efforts of various responsible parties.

In this or in some such way, it is possible to bring into a plan the individuality that characterizes the fishermen and the fish trade, the intimate local knowledge of resources and of their own capabilities. It is hoped to blend these virtues with the experience and the aids of the Federal and Provincial governments. In this way the plan is not laid down from above, nor brought in at second-hand from some other place. The plan grows out of local industry and government, each making its own contribution to the formulation and the ultimate application of schemes, thereby providing something that has a reasonably good chance of successful results.

This sort of experiment may not satisfy those who are impatient for progress or who are looking for spectacular achievements on the American model. It may prove, however, to be the best type of planning for the available resources of the Atlantic Provinces, and that must always be the ultimate test.

Lobster traps piled by the shore at North Rustico, P.E.I.

Photo George Hunter



The famous Dutch architect has been appointed to design areas of The Hague and other cities to be reconstructed following war damage. In a paper originally addressed to the Belgian Society of Modern Architects and Town Planners, he urges that the character of the modern city should reflect honestly the way it is built and used. There are now good reasons to avoid over-concentration at the centre and unending sprawl at the rim. One must accept the frequent repetition of simply shaped buildings; visual emphasis is to be obtained by the careful placing of the few focal institutions (in which there are exciting structural devices to be exploited) and by variety of shape and surface in the horizontal planes between the buildings. The art of city-building lies in 'the grave and moving play of space'. An English translation of this paper appeared in the September 1951 issue of the Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects.

URBANISME : EXPRESSION DE SON TEMPS

par Willem Dudok*

LE MONDE désemparé se trouve placé devant un problème urbanistique et architectural d'une importance telle que l'histoire de la culture n'en a pas connu jusqu'à présent. Pourquoi devons-nous accepter ce problème non dans un esprit traditionnel, mais dans un esprit moderne? Parce que l'artiste vit dans le présent, et même dans l'avenir. Parce que l'esprit créateur est axé normalement sur le renouveau des formes et non sur leur répétition. Parce que nous sommes des novateurs, essentiellement et de par notre nature. Voilà bien des arguments en suffisance. Et je pourrais en finir là.

Mais dans cette éventualité, je n'aurais pu aider votre Société, qui m'a fait l'honneur de m'accueillir comme un des vôtres, d'une manière convaincante dans ce combat contre une société conservatrice, combat qui est de tous les temps et de tous les pays.

Je veux donc essayer de motiver une tendance moderne selon une conception raisonnable et telle que j'essaie de la pratiquer. Je veux y rattacher certaines considérations critiques, car je ne suis pas du tout d'accord avec tout ce qui se targue de modernisme, et je crois servir au mieux l'art architectural moderne, en combattant les excès et les folies.

Urbanisme et Architecture: quel est le but final de chacun d'eux? *C'est d'organiser harmonieusement l'espace nécessaire à l'homme et à la société.* Impregnons-nous bien, je vous en prie, de ce principe primordial. Si j'aborde le problème que je veux traiter avec vous, en partant du général pour aboutir au particulier—et cela n'est-il pas la manière la plus logique?—j'en viens tout d'abord à l'urbanisme. Ce qui requiert immédiatement

notre attention, c'est la relation qui doit être établie entre la ville en tant qu'ensemble, et son entourage, la région rurale.

A notre époque, où l'accroissement de la population se révèle angoissante, par sa dispersion chaotique à travers tout le pays, il ne peut y avoir place pour le hasard. La région rurale doit être protégée contre l'expansion irrationnelle et la poussée illimitée de nos villes. Le peuple a le plus grand intérêt à la conservation intacte de la campagne, qui constitue pour lui un besoin primordial. La fierté naïve, causée par l'accroissement du chiffre de la population, est remplacée de plus en plus par une conception plus exacte du bonheur humain, bonheur qui n'est pas servi par une croissance démesurée de nos villes. La circulation accélérée, non seulement dans sa manifestation matérielle—je veux dire l'auto—mais surtout dans sa manifestation spirituelle—j'entends par là le téléphone, la radio, le cinéma—ne rattache plus autant les avantages de la vie culturelle d'une société aux grands centres de population. La nature même de la circulation a d'ailleurs été modifiée. Si le chemin de fer, lié au système rigide du rail, a provoqué la concentration de la population, il est non moins certain que la circulation infiniment plus souple des autos a une tendance de décentralisation. Maintenant cette décentralisation est nécessaire, car l'expansion démesurée de la ville et l'accroissement ininterrompu de la circulation créent dans le cœur de nos vieilles villes, des difficultés à peine solubles.

Prévenir vaut mieux que guérir; il est grand temps que nous autres urbanistes pensions non seulement à l'extension de la ville mais aussi à sa limitation. Les avantages de la concentration ont des limites sous tous les rapports et dans tous les domaines: pourquoi n'en serait-il pas de même dans le domaine urbanistique? Qu'on me comprenne bien: si je propage à cette tribune l'idée de la limitation des villes, j'entends fixer des limites à imposer à leur extension horizontale. La vie est dynamique et une ville vivante évolue sans cesse; pour cette raison même

* Le doyen des architectes hollandais, Willem Marinus Dudok est né à Amsterdam. Comme architecte-urbaniste il a fait un grand nombre de dessins pour plusieurs villes hollandaises. Il reçut le *Royal Gold Medal* du *Royal Institute of British Architects* en 1935, et il est *honorary corresponding member* de l'Institut Américain des Architectes. Ce texte est extrait d'une conférence prononcée devant la Société Belge des Urbanistes et Architectes Modernes.

il faut qu'à l'intérieur de la ville limitée, il reste des possibilités de vie et d'évolution. Seulement l'accroissement dont je parle, cet écoulement infini de la ville dans la campagne, n'est souvent qu'un phénomène d'inertie. Et j'ai la ferme conviction qu'il serait méritoire dans bien des cas, de limiter consciemment cette croissance.

Nous avons fait cela à Hilversum par exemple, et je suis quelque peu fier d'en avoir pris l'initiative. Nous y avons préservé les beautés naturelles de la campagne environnante—beautés qui sont la principale raison de vivre de notre commune florissante—en encerclant la ville de tous côtés par des réserves naturelles, où il est défendu de construire, et nous avons conçu le plan d'extension délibérément comme un plan de limitation, de parachèvement.

Je me souviens d'avoir cité cet exemple de ma pratique personnelle dans une conférence donnée à Londres en 1934. Etant impressionné par les terribles problèmes de circulation et d'habitation qui se présentaient là-bas, je posai à mes collègues la question s'il n'aurait pas été sage de limiter la croissance de Londres, ou du moins de régler celle-ci systématiquement. Comment aurais-je pu deviner qu'une dizaine d'années plus tard Sir Patrick Abercrombie aurait le courage de poursuivre cette même pensée et de la conduire vers ses dernières conséquences, en remplaçant un million de londonniens dans des villes satellites, à construire dans des cadres de verdure; quelle pensée salutaire pour le Grand-Londres! En effet, la décentralisation, pensée typiquement moderne dans l'urbanisme. Décentralisation, ainsi que la lutte contre la ville trop grande.

Si maintenant nous considérons la ville en elle-même, l'organisation harmonieuse de l'espace—ainsi que j'appelais ci-dessus le principe premier de tout l'art architectural—demande avant-tout la distribution systématique des régions affectées au travail, à l'habitation, à la circulation et à la récréation. Il convient que les zones d'habitation soient situées près des zones affectées au travail, mais aussi à proximité des zones de verdure, dont la nécessité ne saurait être assez soulignée. Nous ne désirons plus la ville amorphe, mais nous tendons vers une texture de ville systématique hiérarchique, de l'habitation à l'unité de voisinage; de l'unité de voisinage au quartier; du quartier au secteur de ville; de celui-ci à la ville. Et là aussi la pensée logique de décentralisation se fait sentir: nous donnons à ces divers éléments urbains, et spécialement au quartier, une grande indépendance, et de ce fait une complexité plus marquée, et nous entourons ces quartiers de préférence de zones vertes. En un certain sens cela n'est autre chose qu'une des manifestations de notre lutte contre la ville trop grande. L'introduction systématique de zones vertes de récréation, comme des artères, dans la ville de pierre, est encore un élément typiquement moderne de l'urbanisme actuel. Il est vrai que les villes possédaient déjà par le passé des parcs, quoiqu'en nombre bien trop restreint, mais jamais la zone



L'hôtel de ville renommé de Hilversum, oeuvre de Dudok

Famous town hall in Hilversum, completed to the author's design in 1931.

Photo Netherlands Information Bureau

de récréation n'a été conçue en si étroite liaison avec la zone d'habitation qu'actuellement.

J'en arrive maintenant à l'édification architecturale de la ville. Un bon plan de ville veut être réalisé en harmonie avec son caractère. Un plan sans caractère n'en est pas un. Il est de la tâche de l'urbaniste d'exprimer ce caractère de façon très nette. Les immeubles, dont l'ensemble compose nos villes, ne doivent pas s'élever d'une manière chaotique les uns à côté des autres. Il faut que la plan urbain comporte des indications précises concernant la répartition des constructions, car cette répartition est d'intérêt social, économique et esthétique. La beauté d'une ville n'est pas accidentelle; n'est pas un effet du hasard: elle repose sur la répétition et l'alternance au juste moment et dans une juste mesure. Pour ces éléments un bon plan urbain doit contenir les indications nécessaires, non seulement en deux dimensions—en plan terrier donc—mais pour le moins schématiquement, en trois dimensions.

C'est dans cet esprit que j'ai conçu généralement mes plans de détail; je crois en effet que de cette manière seule, l'urbaniste peut remplir sa mission en toute conscience de ses responsabilités, afin de préparer une bonne et belle ville, quoique cela se fera sur une base totalement différent du passé. Car les circonstances ont foncièrement changé et jamais encore il n'a existé des arguments aussi puissants pour l'édification d'une architecture réellement moderniste.

La maison individuelle, construite l'une à la suite de l'autre, avec toute la variété des formes dans lesquelles s'exprimaient les désirs du maître de l'ouvrage, ainsi que les capacités artistiques de son architecte; cet élément tout à fait normal, tout à fait caractéristique de nos vieilles villes, est devenu une exception rarissime. En remplacement nous voyons s'élaborer de façon massive un système de logement à grande échelle. Il est certain que dans la construction de ces habitations, il y a encore une différenciation entre la maison familiale, l'immeuble à appartements et par ci et par là un gratte-ciel, etc., mais il est tout aussi évident que la normalisation et la réduction à quelques types fondamentaux sont la base logique et inévitable d'une telle conception du logement de la population. Dans ce problème l'habitation ne signifie rien qu'une unité qui se répète et qui ne peut plus prétendre exprimer la vie individuelle de la famille. Les bourgeois cossus qui par le passé bâtissaient leurs maisons, leurs palais, aux endroits les mieux choisis de la cité, ont disparu. Aussi bien les catégories que les classes se confondent peu à peu sur le plan économique, et, pour autant qu'il y ait encore des riches, ils ne recherchent plus les grandes maisons parce qu'ils y sont de plus en plus mal servi. Aussi voyons-nous les maisons des privilégiés, et des moins bien dotés se confondre de plus en plus sur le plan architectural.

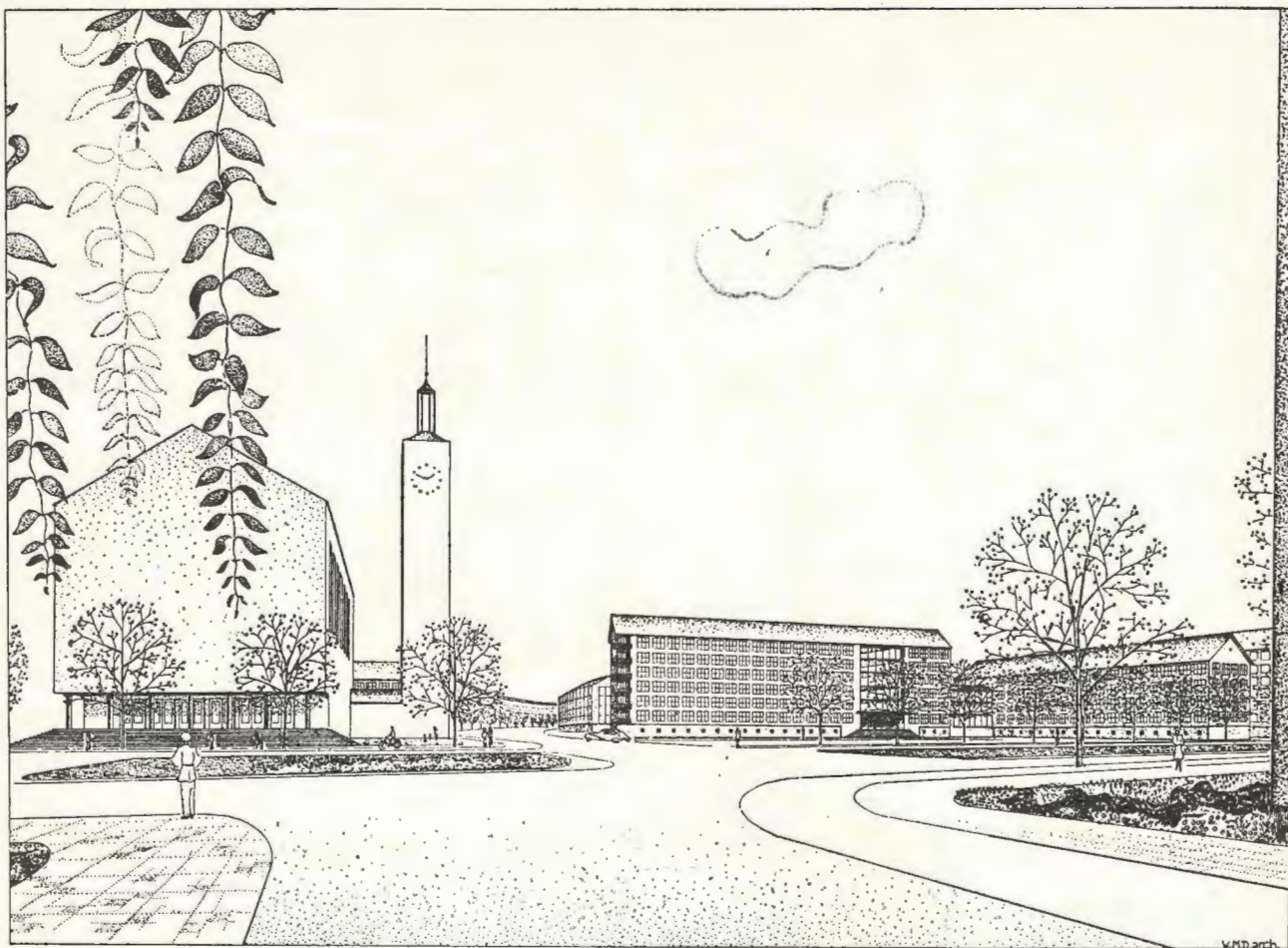
Nous ne trouvons plus là les attachants contrastes de l'architecture du passé et cela constituerait un appauvrissement de l'urbanisme, si nous ne disposions de nouveaux éléments qui nous font garder confiance. Cette confiance nous l'avons effectivement, car bâtir à notre époque fait surgir la possibilité de la création de quartiers entiers, conçus d'une seule jet, et cela nous permet de concevoir l'urbanisme en première instance en tant qu'un *Art de l'Espace*. Je crois que ce fut Berlioz qui disait: "le plus bel instrument? mais c'est l'orchestre!" La ville n'est-elle pas la plus belle oeuvre architecturale? Car notre vie collective, avec ses multiples aspects et ses nombreuses facettes, fait apparaître dans nos cités et nos banlieues la richesse d'une différenciation extrêmement variée.

Le Survey nous donne une idée de tout ce qu'on doit y rencontrer en fait de bâtiments administratifs, églises de croyances diverses, écoles pour études de tous genres, salles de récréation, de sports, etc. J'estime qu'il appartient à l'urbaniste de distribuer ces divers bâtiments ou de suggérer au moins leur emplacement et cela de telle sorte qu'ils apportent dans l'ensemble des constructions com-

munes d'habitation la variété la plus naturelle. C'est ainsi que j'ai conçu ma tâche, mais il va de soi qu'il faut s'efforcer d'exécuter ce travail avec la souplesse qui convient. De cette manière, nos villes peuvent prétendre former une synthèse à la fois logique et belle: synthèse qui comprend l'élément classique de la répétition, propre à nos conceptions modernes de logement; qui comprend en outre l'élément romantique de la variété par la distribution exacte des bâtiments particuliers. Et en dépit des limitations auxquelles les difficultés financières de notre époque nous contraignent, j'entrevois cependant ici la possibilité réelle d'une beauté typiquement moderne pour nos nouvelles villes, car avec les moyens les plus simples on peut produire de la beauté urbaine. Ne cesserions-nous pas d'être artistes, si en fin de compte la beauté n'était pas notre but?

Une telle conception présuppose la collaboration harmonieuse de l'urbaniste avec l'architecte qui partage à la réalisation du plan urbain. La nature même de leur tâche respective détermine aussi bien leur dépendance mutuelle que la limitation naturelle et respective de leur intervention. L'architecte qui bâtit dans une ville existante reconnaît se soumettre à une des exigences primordiales qui veut que son oeuvre soit étudiée dans une relation déterminée avec son entourage. La fonction architecturale du plan urbain consiste à donner aux architectes des directives positives suffisantes afin qu'ils puissent travailler de commun accord dans une ville encore inexistante. Personnellement je ne me suis jamais senti à l'étroit quand il me fallait concevoir, en tant qu'architecte, un bâtiment à intégrer dans un plan urbain fait par un confrère. *Ce n'est pas dans la liberté illimitée, mais dans l'acceptation raisonnable de limites qu'un bon projet architectural peut être élaboré.* Ce ne sont donc pas les arguments qui me manquent pour avoir confiance dans la collaboration confraternelle sur une pareille base: collaboration qui sert les intérêts de tous.

Hélas je doute fort que notre organisation politique soutienne d'une manière suffisante la saine conception de l'Urbanisme telle que je viens de vous l'exposer. A l'époque du baroque, la dernière et peut-être la plus belle période que nous avons connue en urbanisme et en architecture, il faut possible de créer des oeuvres splendides parce qu'un roi avait placé sa confiance dans un architecte, et parce qu'il faisait exécuter intégralement les plans de celui-ci. Je ne désire certainement pas un retour à une telle époque, car je sais que la beauté que nous admirons toujours, fut bien souvent achetée au prix du sang et des larmes du peuple. Je reconnais également que la société, et de même l'urbanisme, sont devenus d'une complexité tellement étendue qu'un bon plan urbain ne peut plus être qu'une oeuvre de collaboration. *L'essence* même du travail créatif ne s'est pourtant pas modifié, et ce sera un seul homme qui devra en déterminer la forme finale, même si plusieurs y ont collaboré.



The author's design for a green square in a blitzed office district of The Hague.

Dessin par l'auteur: une place entourée d'édifices dans un quartier devasté de la Haye

Mais à ce moment les difficultés infinies ne font que commencer! Chacun de nous n'a-t-il pas expérimenté que notre démocratie ne vit que trop dans les palabres, les paperasses, les commissions et les compromis, et qu'elle ne connaît que trop peu l'autorité et la confiance? Ne sera-t-il jamais possible que notre forme de gouvernement démocratique pourtant si raisonnable, réussisse à édifier en son sein, une démocratie culturelle dans laquelle l'oeuvre de création devienne une possibilité? Je ne parle pas ici de dictature, mais d'une collaboration hiérarchique de travailleurs qui, libérée de toute immixtion préjudiciable d'une bureaucratie accablante, puisse faire profiter la société des talents dont elle dispose, et cela sans compromis superflus. . .

J'ai été frappé par certains plans d'extension de petites villes et villages dans des pays dont la population est très peu dense, et où l'on se réjouit de rencontrer enfin un village sur des routes infinies. Ces plans d'extension se composaient notamment de quelques gratte-ciel, et pourquoi donc? Ces braves villageois ne vivraient-ils pas plus heureux dans une cité-jardin fleurie et dans de fraîches

maisons familiales? Une telle solution n'est certes pas aussi spectaculaire, mais n'est-elle pas beaucoup plus humaine et en fait plus belle, en passant sous silence encore le côté économique. Si je crois devoir m'élever contre de semblables réalisations, qui dans certains milieux professionnels sont considérées comme des exemples, et par certains comme des sommets de l'art, c'est parce que je sens malgré cela le besoin de vous communiquer toute la confiance que j'éprouve et toutes les possibilités que j'entrevois pour le développement de notre architecture moderne. Car il n'est évidemment pas vrai que la liberté que nous permet la technique de construction ne soit qu'un danger. Ce peut être aussi un salut, si nous nous servons de ces moyens d'une manière significative au profit de la valeur architecturale véritable telle que je viens de vous la décrire. Permettez-moi de me répéter: *l'Architecture c'est le jeu beau et sérieux des espaces. Nous devons jouer ce jeu de notre manière*, en exprimant l'époque que nous vivons, et l'appareillage technique de cette époque nous donne les possibilités architecturales qui seront typiquement de notre temps.

Le principe tout à fait logique de la séparation de fonctions, par l'emploi de l'acier et du béton armé comme élément portant, et d'autres matériaux comme enveloppement: ce principe moderne permet des portées auxquelles on ne pouvait penser autrefois, et rend possibles des constructions d'une légèreté quasi immatérielle. Souligné par la toiture plate, l'enveloppement, ce moyen matériel de faire parler l'espace, peut s'alléger dans une mesure impressionnante de clarté et de transparence. Cette méthode de bâtir sans détour est à mon avis bien caractéristique pour notre architecture moderne.

J'ai une profonde admiration pour le style baroque qui créa des oeuvres où l'espace est traité d'une manière magistrale: ce furent bien souvent des espaces qui chantaient: espaces à la fois dignes et joyeux. Mais combien l'enveloppe spaciale devait être lourde et massive: les murs, les plafonds et les voûtes devenaient en eux-même un des buts de la construction. Ils exigeaient bien d'attention, aussi furent-ils décorés avec la grace surchargée, si caractéristique pour cette époque. Époque bien plus raffinée et plus somptueuse que la nôtre, mais ayant sans la moindre doute un horizon plus étroit.

L'homme moderne ne désire sûrement plus une ornementation surchargée: il se rend compte à nouveau que *dans tous les domaines de l'art l'effet le plus marquant est souvent obtenu par les moyens les plus sobres, les plus*

Le Palais Royal à Paris commencé pour le cardinal Richelieu en 1628



austères. Nous connaissons de très beaux dessins où rien qu'avec quelques lignes l'expression est complètement atteinte, malgré tout ce qui a été éliminé. Cette sobriété, nous la connaissons également dans la musique: Mahler a composé des symphonies que beaucoup d'entre nous trouvent trop bruyantes, mais dans ses 'Kindertotenlieder' et 'Das Lied von der Erde' cette personnalité discutée atteint des sommets solitaires, précisément parce qu'il a su renoncer à beaucoup de choses. Dans la littérature nous connaissons également des pages dans lesquelles l'essentiel n'est même pas exprimé par des mots, mais évoqué entre les lignes. Or, les moyens modernes de construction nous permettent à nous également de renoncer à beaucoup afin d'atteindre ainsi une bien plus forte expression de l'espace.

Ces derniers jours, une revue américaine m'est parvenue, reproduisant entre autre le bâtiment de l'aérodrome *Idlewild* de New York. Je fus frappé par le beau jeu de volumes de ses énormes salles d'où les voyageurs ont une vue parfaitement libre sur tout l'aéroport. C'est un bâtiment dont l'exactitude de la forme est de la même qualité que celle des avions qui atterrissent tout autour. Nous nous trouvons devant une création suggestive de volume en parfaite harmonie avec la destination du bâtiment. Afin d'exprimer davantage ma pensée, je me permets de vous citer un exemple bien plus modeste puisé dans

ma propre pratique: le projet d'un hôtel de ville pour Velsen-Ymuiden, le port d'Amsterdam, situé sur une place qui doit encore être aménagée selon mon projet pour la reconstruction de cette ville. La salle de Conseil, siège de l'Administration Communale, fait saillie au niveau du premier étage, face à la place, et est portée par deux points d'appui. L'entrée principale est de ce fait protégée par cette salle, construite en encorbellement. Ainsi le bâtiment a l'air de faire un geste bien précis: comme un poing la salle de Conseil se tend vers la place, symbolisant l'emprise de l'autorité. Quelle intensité d'expression peut-on atteindre à notre époque avec si peu de moyens constructifs!

Ainsi j'arrive au terme de mes considérations. J'espère vous avoir rendu sensibles les raisons de ma confiance dans l'avenir de notre art architectural. En effet, si nous bâtissons dans cet esprit, en tablant sur des plans d'extension suggestifs, et en usant les admirables moyens de notre époque, je suis convaincu que nous pourrons en bonne collaboration et avec les moyens les plus simples et les plus purs, *créer des villes dans lesquelles les espaces chanteront à nouveau.*

Un architecte bien connu d'Ottawa discute les implications esthétiques du projet d'aménagement de la capitale nationale. Il indique les contradictions qu'on peut prévoir en l'effort de placer des maisons d'offices fonctionnelles le long des grands boulevards proposés. Les esquisses sont de l'auteur.

THE INTENDED APPEARANCE OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL

by Watson Balharrie*

FOR some time now the plan for development of Ottawa has been completed. The groundwork of the master plan has been laid. In the words of the late Rt. Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King, "The master plan arouses the urgent need for wise community planning and efficient traffic and transportation facilities. It corrects deficiencies resulting from unplanned undertakings in the past; it enhances the possibilities of preserving that which is, as yet, unspoiled."

The task of determining as far as possible the present and future needs of the national capital in terms of land use and circulation lines has been completed; of course not every detail is decided, but there is in being a pattern which if carried out will fulfil, in part at least, the Utopian concept outlined by Mr. Mackenzie King.

The General Report of the Consultant to the National Capital Planning Committee indicates a planned development of some 900 square miles. Of this greater district, a small portion comprising the cities of Ottawa and Hull forms the urban focus. In this urban area the plan is quite specific in its detail and recommendations. It has made an effort to recognize and correct any natural or created deficiencies—such as the unfortunate location of heavy industry relative to the stateliness of Parliament Hill, and the complication of rail and vehicular traffic in the congested uptown areas. Roads have been conceived on a scale which not only assures improved circulation but in many cases gives an impression of grandeur. Many of these grand areas are to house the buildings of state.

The Report lists a large group of public buildings which are proposed as part of the architectural development. These include buildings for the Department of Veterans' Affairs, Bureau of Statistics, Public Works Laboratories, a Printing Bureau, a National Defence Building, National Theatre, National Gallery, National

Library and many others. Clearly the Federal Government will be the largest single purchaser of architecture for some time to come, and already some of the principal buildings are in process of construction and others are in the design stage.

To assure that these buildings achieve a degree of ornamental monumentality, a Committee on Aesthetics to control the appearance of public land and buildings has been set up. This Committee, the Report states, should recognize that the function of a building "is always the commanding factor in its design"; but the building should not be "permitted to express merely utilitarian requirements, regardless of environment". This directness is qualified, and the Report goes on to say that, while no style is recommended or compulsory, the "rule does not preclude the use of certain elements which have been more particularly favoured by a given style. The incorporation of those elements does not mean copying them, but rather their adaptation to other means and ways of expression". Apparently there is a distinction between incorporating and copying. The definition of these terms from the Report might, however, tax the integrity of the designing architect.

The aesthetic merit of a building is evidently to be judged primarily by the relationship of masses to silhouettes, and by the uniformity of roof angles; this would seem to imply a conception of major buildings primarily as façades clothing the corridor streets. Degree of control is to be determined by the importance of the individual design within the over-all picture. Existing buildings are apparently to act as pivot points; and their horizontal lines are to be determining factors in the design of new buildings along not only Wellington Street, but Elgin Street, as well. The unity of the street is to be preserved at all costs.

In an effort to produce an architectural elegance with which to invest the grand boulevards, the element of humanity seems to have been dropped by the wayside. Rather than achieve a sense of modesty in scale compatible with the living habits of Canadian urban people, there seems to be a desire for the grandeur usually associated with the pomp and circumstance of an earlier time.

* Watson Balharrie, MRAIC, is a partner in a prominent firm of architects whose practice extends over much of the lower Ottawa valley. He has lived in the capital all his life, and taken an active part in professional and public affairs there. An ardent photographer, he also lectures regularly at McGill University School of Architecture. The sketches herewith are from his own pen.



"The monumental ensemble of Wellington Street"
"L'ensemble monumental de la Rue Wellington"

National Capital Planning Committee
Comité d'Aménagement de la Capitale Nationale

REPORT CONFOUNDS IMPRESSIVE WITH IMITATIVE

Let us admit that the problem of planning the streets and buildings of greater Ottawa is not one which can be taken lightly. To merit the title Capital, Ottawa is expected to have a certain architectural quality perhaps not found in cities of lesser stature. While the living needs are parallel to those of other urban areas in Canada, there is an extra consideration to be met. This extra quality does not apply to the character of the residential neighbourhoods, but is to be present in the visual expression of the buildings of state. But this quality is not something which can be applied as a frosting, nor is it something which can be borrowed from another era. It is rather a straightforward recognition of all the factors which unite to make a building and its environment a fit place for human occupancy. The number and relationship of the buildings alone will identify the metropolitan centre as that of a city having national importance. It is not, then, necessary 'to incorporate the elements which characterize a given style' in order to give the Capital its identity. Yet the work forecast has a nostalgic form.

There is reason for an aesthetic control committee, but there is also need for a recognition of more common and workaday urban requirements. A little closer examination of the plan indicates an abundance of grand vistas along carefully planted boulevards. Axial roadways with circular junctions are numerous, radiating outward from arbitrary focal groups of government buildings. Supposedly, the broad formal boulevards planned in such number for Ottawa will lend an air of graciousness to the metropolitan centre. They offer a species of traditional background for the functions of state which involve ceremonial parades. Fortress-like on each side of the grande allée will stand the be-corniced 'silhouettes', like canyon walls—and just as permanent. Visual penetration of these walls is to be impossible at the pedestrian level, except for the odd peek through an arcaded path or roadway joining the otherwise unbroken solids.

Wellington Street is to have a very defined character, comparable in its function with Constitution Avenue in Washington. The prescribed character stems not from an analysis of evident building trends in Ottawa, but

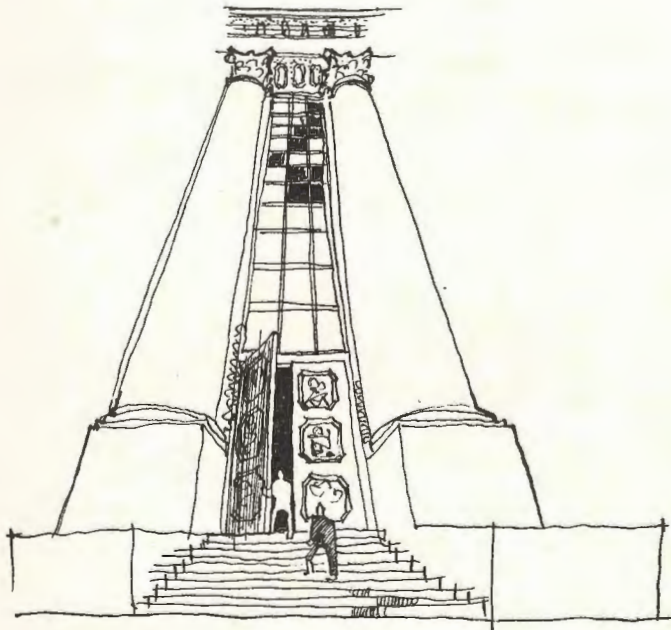
from desire for a particular visual effect alone. Already the shape of things to come is being formed along these lines. 'Picturesque silhouettes and conformity of cornice lines' are indeed the governing design factors. Is this the 'commanding functional need' upon which the buildings were to have been conceived?*

If tradition has its way, then the grand avenues will be flanked with huge masses, each tied to the other by roof-lines and bands of stone, the whole contained within accentuating blobs of masonry at each end—all proper and correct and in strict Renaissance good taste. The 'silhouette' requirement will be satisfied. Constitution Avenue will be re-created.

Unfortunate accusations, such as empty grandeur and over-forced impressiveness, conveyed by the word *monumental* will be justified. Buildings will impart by their vast dimensions a feeling of insignificance to passing people. Ground-hugging solidity, with all the awful permanence implied, will be realized.

GOOD WORK ZONES NO LONGER WEAR SOLID FRONTS

To the architect who now considers buildings primarily as places where people live, work and play, this official approach is most confusing. Ordinary human needs just do not seem to fit between the silhouettes and cornice lines. It is most difficult to reconcile the office functions of the Civil Service (who are human, after all) to this official view of their future accommodation—massive, opaque blocks of stone—when a type of building that is lighter and more comfortably satisfying is now possible.



A satisfactory expression of a set of office buildings would be a grouping of slender structures standing free in space with passages and areas defined between them at ground level. The portion of each building housing ordinary office areas would then declare by its appearance that there is adequate daylighting and a pleasant



view in each office space. The narrow, long slab on edge, with corridor down the centre and office depths worked out to give daylight to the workers within, assures maximum of working comfort to all areas. This is the accepted form of the contemporary office block because of the architect's regard for that comfort, and for future flexibility in the subdivision of working spaces within an economically built frame of columns and floor-planes. The United Nations Secretariat building is a well-known example. Certainly this solution is better than the square building plan with deep offices—many without any daylight, or facing into dull courts, difficult to maintain. The thin slab rather than the massive block is the basic component of the office district of our age. But the arrangement of slabs on the ground calls for sites of different size and shape than those along the old corridor street.

* The perspective drawings for three structures now being completed in the Capital were reproduced in *Canadian Art* Vol. VIII No. 2, and in this Association's *Newsletter* for June 1951.—Editor



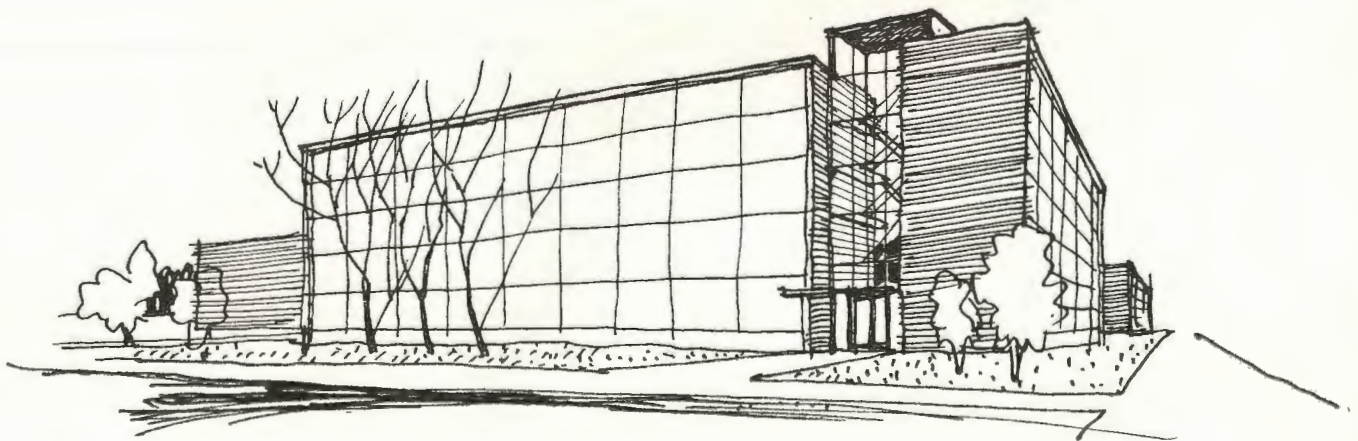
Where T or L shaped plans are required, it is possible visually to separate the two wings, thus showing clearly that the building is not a great cube. Minor projections and blank walls can be used to separate the real slab elements in such combinations (*below*).

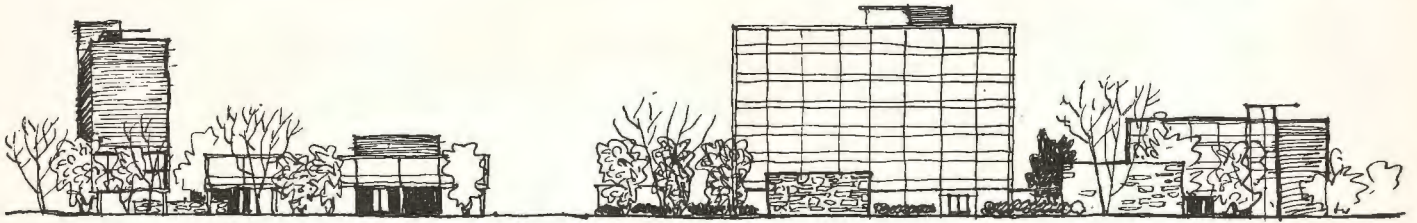
Floor to ceiling glass in ground-floor public areas would provide visual access through the buildings to the spaces beyond, tending to free the structures from the ground. Pleasant vistas may be created using portions of foreground buildings as framing devices. A new delight in the environment is opened up in this way (*below, opposite page*).

There are many arguments both for and against the building which appears to stand on stilts—so that the lower floor, being transparent, exposes only the vertical structural members. While this type of treatment does

not solve all problems, its principal advantage is the freeing of ground space; pedestrian or even vehicular circulation can be arranged with minimum interference from the buildings. Unloosing the structure off the soil in this way is perhaps the extreme opposite to the traditional solid foundation; but it does have another very realistic use, particularly where the site is limited and a sense of lively openness at ground level is desired.

Regard only for the façades of the avenue is indicated by the plan. Only the street exposures of buildings seem to have been given primary consideration in many cases. Presumably the back yards will take care of themselves; and development of the environment, other than that which is viewed by the tourists, will be haphazard. Free planning on the other hand—with full use of the sites and care for all aspects of the buildings—requires con-



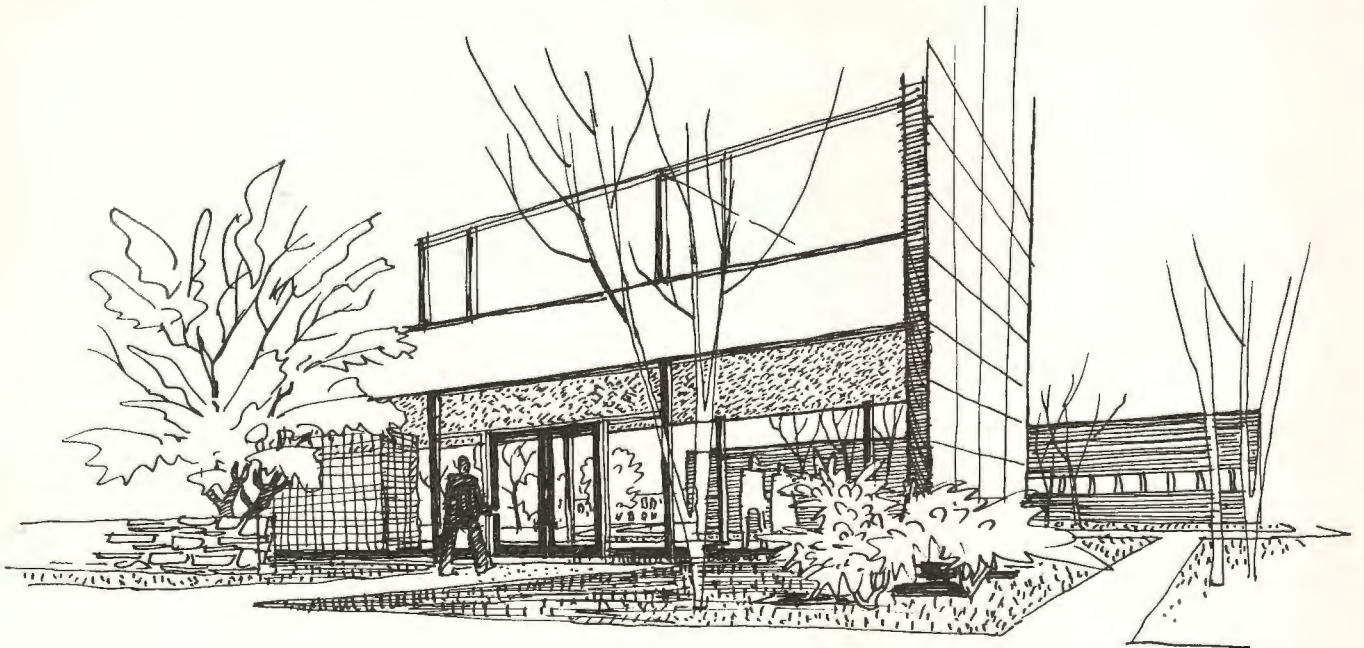


sideration far beyond the front elevation to assure a beauty that will be more than skin deep. (See front cover and page 48.)

If the designing architect is to be restricted to a degree which is not compatible with good sense in building design and grouping, then the aesthetic control committee will not fulfil a useful purpose. It may help to satisfy the preconceptions of a minority whose wish it is to see the Capital emerge as an archaic gem; but it will not

satisfy the urban requirements of an enlightened humanity.

The realization of the Capital plan is to constitute a monument commemorating the sacrifices of the Second War; but true monumentality cannot now be conceived so consciously. Perhaps the monument of our era which will be honoured most by posterity will be the power dam, or the planned housing development—some project not intentionally designed as a memorial, but rather as an instrument of service for the use and welfare of people.





New Towns: 1766 and 1941

There is one architecturally composed front to the Edinburgh (New Town) houses, that on the avenues approached by the master's vehicle. The backs of the houses, for servants only, are of haphazard and unorganized design. At Baldwin Hills all sides are equally important. They are all approached by the tenants or their friends. So all façades were studied with similar care. (See p. 53)

—from *Toward New Towns for America* by Clarence Stein
Photos of Edinburgh by the REVIEW

Directeur des projets de recherche de la Société Centrale d'Hypothèques et de Logement, M. Carver est aussi un conseiller de cette Association. Il trait ici de la signification au Canada des idées contenues dans un livre récent de l'urbaniste américain Clarence Stein.

THE EXCELLENT EXPERIMENTS

A Review by Humphrey Carver

THE publication of Clarence Stein's *Toward New Towns for America** is a landmark in the literature of community planning and housing. The great experiments in town-building with which he has been associated, particularly Radburn and the Greenbelt towns, were already widely known and have already left their mark upon many cities. Mr. Stein's ideas have reached Halifax and Winnipeg and, though little understood by some of its proponents, the Radburn Plan is part of the vocabulary of subdivision planners. But we have not before had an opportunity to appreciate the whole series of experiments from Sunnyside Gardens (1924) to Baldwin Hills Village (1941), from New Jersey to California. In fact, these important demonstrations could not make their full impact upon our times unless the record was embodied in literature; for few of us are able to visit such a far-flung gallery of exhibits. Fortunately this pioneer in planning and building turns out to be an author who can describe his works with modesty of language and clarity of illustration. For this reason *Toward New Towns for America* takes its place with the other great books which have influenced city-building during the present century. (Among these I would also number Sir Raymond Unwin's *Town Planning in Practice*, the works of Le Corbusier, and Catherine Bauer's *Modern Housing*.)

Perhaps the most remarkable feature of Mr. Stein's achievement as an evangelist is not the originality of his ideas but the fact that he managed to get them carried out. There are ten projects containing altogether nearly seven thousand households. Ebenezer Howard and Le Corbusier, the two great prophets, have had no such opportunity to validate the principles they expounded. This must be partly due to Stein's skill in negotiation and organization; but must also be attributed to the evident good sense of his proposals. He was fortunate also in the opportunities offered by that fleeting age of enlightenment, the early days of the New Deal when the three Greenbelt towns were built.

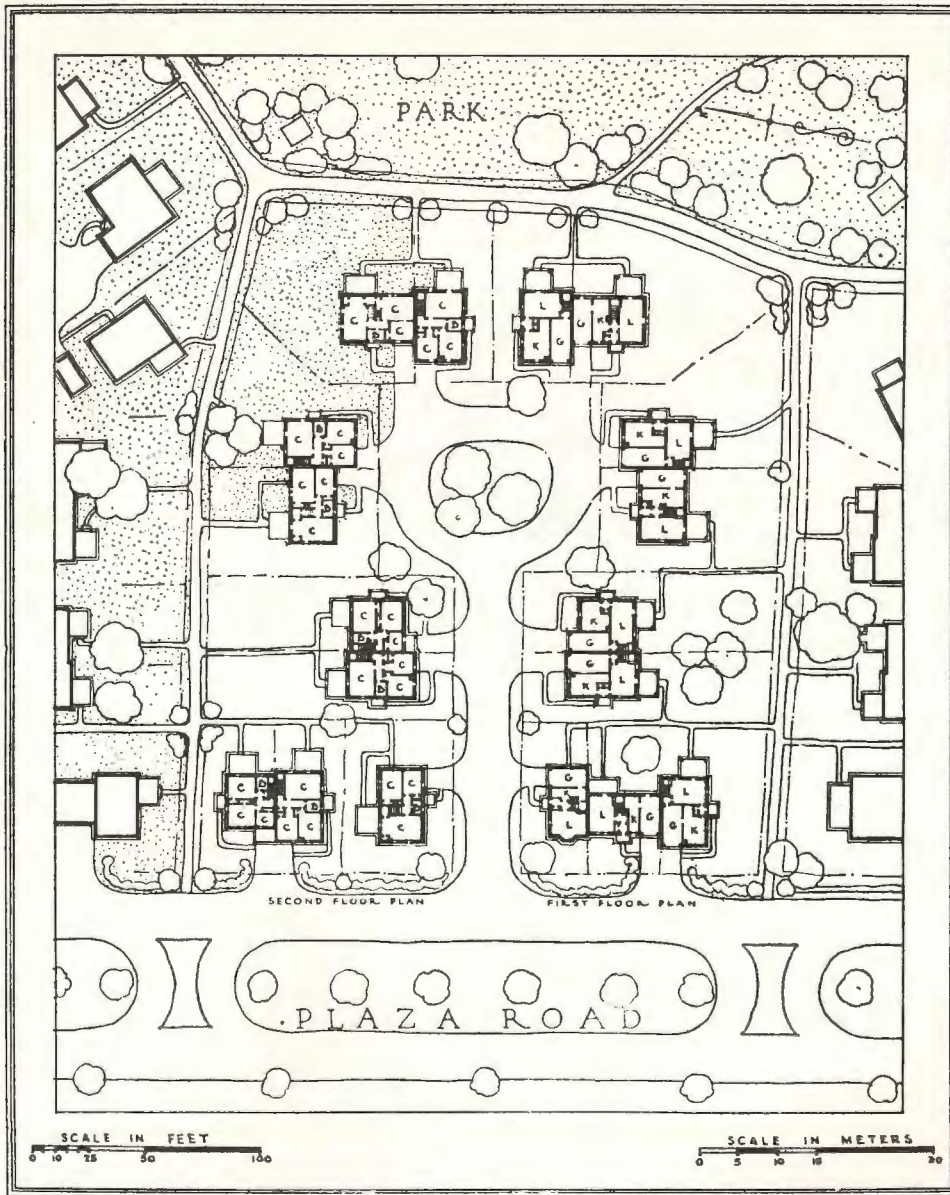
The communities built under Stein's general guidance are beautiful solutions to the practical problems of domestic economy and family life. As works of art they are in the tradition of the Garden City movement, brought up-to-date to fit the motor age. The treatment of open space is largely due to the imagination of Henry Wright, Stein's early partner who was trained as a landscape architect. The houses are small in scale and architecturally unsophisticated, the lawns and informal planting are romantic, the whole composition muted in tone.

The Radburn plan, in its several variations, has shown the way to group houses around short streets or parking yards withdrawn from the traffic circulation streets. From this follows the reorientation of houses, with living rooms facing not on to the streets or yards, but on to the

Plan of Greenbelt, Maryland by Hale Walker; early application of Stein's garden court layout



* *Toward New Towns for America* by Clarence S. Stein, with an Introduction by Lewis Mumford. Liverpool, the University Press, 1951. (Agents for Western Hemisphere: Public Administration Service, 1313E. 60th St., Chicago; price \$5.00.) 245 pp., 170 illustrations.



Burnham Place, Radburn N.J., with houses grouped to face away from service road and turning circle; this and illustrations on following three pages are from the book

interior green open spaces. This requires a revolution in house planning of much greater consequence than a great deal of so-called Modern architecture. In fact even that modern cliché, the picture window, has little functional justification without providing the kind of picture which the Greenbelt towns provide—but this kind of architectural effect has no place in the modest setting of these communities.

The value of these great experiments is in their unabashed search for excellence. In the hurried efforts to expand our cities we continually have to compromise with mediocrity, to tolerate the adequate, to accept the standards of the bureaucrat. Housing administrators and

public officials have indeed been at a great disadvantage because the only standards they have been given to work with have been minimum standards. This breeds a habit of mind that scorns the excellent and retreats from leadership. So Clarence Stein is rightly scornful of housing bureaucrats and the orthodox methods of city planning and zoning. These methods have so far, it is true, done little to lift our cities above the stereotyped dullness of the new Montreal, Toronto and Winnipeg. But though the Greenbelt towns have shown the goal—and though the Garden City movement has been the one positive, continuous and creative force in community planning—yet these fine examples cannot solve the great



Turning circle shown in plan opposite; space gained by grouping houses

Photo Gretchen van Tassel

problems with which we are faced. They may show what ought to be achieved but they don't show how to do it.

Our cities grow through the enterprise and action of innumerable individuals, corporations, builders, homeowners, shopkeepers, investors and industrialists. It is a spontaneous process in which democracy is fulfilled through the enjoyment of action and accomplishment on the part of many people involved in many different ways. It is part of our philosophy that the achievement of perfection is not so important as the opportunity for personal participation and experience. It is not therefore the aim of our community planning to impose an ideal Master Plan upon the building of a city. We have set ourselves a far more difficult task. We aspire to use the processes of individual expression within the framework of law and order. The procedures of community planning offer a method of guiding city growth by the mutual agreement of many persons and interests. The Zoning map must be exposed to public examination, argument and justification. The owners of land in the 'green belt' must accept restrictions upon the profitable use of their property. We must win the votes of the electorate to undertake slum-clearance and low-rental housing. These are our great experiments in the practice of democracy. In this we can be artists on a grand scale, but perhaps not quite such sensitive artists as Clarence Stein.

It has sometimes been said that in Canada our few successful accomplishments in planning have been achieved where a large area of land has been in the hands of a single developer; some of the veterans' rental projects and private developments such as Wildwood in Winnipeg are quoted as good examples of site planning. Further opportunities for building planned communities may now occur, both through the land assembly provisions of Section 35 of the National Housing Act, and where new towns are springing up on our frontiers. Here are the opportunities to follow the examples already provided by Clarence Stein—as he is himself doing for us in Kitimat, the west Coast town to be built for the Aluminum Company. But these are obviously the exceptions to the general situation.

The mediaeval towns grew in a spontaneous way. They owe their charm to the variety of invention with which succeeding generations dealt with the forms of buildings and landscape. Camillo Sitte and Raymond Unwin showed us the fine artistry with which this was done. (Our own maritime towns grew in this way, having some of that charm and also some of the mediaeval standard of housing.) In contrast with the informal gothic town is the grand façade of the Renaissance, its monuments and boulevards and palaces imposed upon the unplanned background. It looked good from the front, like the Chicago waterfront, but left the slums behind the scenery.



Plan for Greenbrook N.J., not built; note preponderance of row houses to yield ample free spaces at low cost

In its relationship with the general urban background the isolated planned project is analogous with the works of the Renaissance. It may be a splendid and successful fragment—yet it may not very materially affect the arrangements made for the great majority. This does not, of course, mean that we should reject any opportunity to carry out such demonstrations; but it does mean that we must primarily pursue the long, patient and often tedious course of planning by legislative procedures and municipal authorities. And in this task the shining examples of the Greenbelt towns and other imaginative experiments must be continually before us. They provide the standards of excellence that must be observed

by our housing administrators and local authorities. For standards of excellence are a necessary antidote to the minimum standards which are the ordinary equipment of administration.

The lessons to be learned from *Toward New Towns for America* are as much in the failures as in the accomplishments. Radburn was planned as a whole community, but only part of it (of project scale) was carried out. Sunnyside has an eccentric elegance in the midst of a gridiron plan. Greenbelt was extended in wartime without understanding of its planning refinements. Mr. Stein describes these failures with the emotions and resignation of a martyr. They do, of course, illustrate that the real purpose must be to weave proper methods of planning into the general texture of city development.

In his introduction to the book Mr. Lewis Mumford provides a tribute to the small group of pioneers who have spearheaded the movement for better housing and planning in America, and he puts their activities in historical perspective. It is indeed remarkable what a small and devoted band has achieved against the vast inertia of American real estate interests. It is also somewhat frightening to realize that, during Canada's great period of urban expansion, there is yet no effective mobilisation of forces with the kind of vision which Clarence Stein has provided. In Canada we are desperately in need of these examples of excellence, to sharpen the aims of planners, housing administrators and investors.

Footpath between gardens at Greendale, Wisconsin





Baldwin Hills Village, Los Angeles (1941); a garden court within a superblock: useful open space without land waste

Photo Margaret Lowe

. . . Existing cities cannot fit the needs of this age without a complete rebuilding. It is not merely that the elements and the details of plan and mass urgently require new forms, but that the relation of these to each other must be radically revised. For this, one must begin with a clean slate and a large one. Therefore it seems to me that the sane policy is first to direct our energy toward building new and complete communities from the ground up: that is to say on open land outside developed urban areas. This we should do until such time as we have adequately demonstrated, by contrast, how unworkable and wasteful are the obsolete patterns of the old cities, and how completely they demand replacement. It is futile to attempt this in a small, piecemeal manner. Meanwhile, where attempts are made to redevelop our old cities, it must be done on an adequate scale to form New Towns or at least modern neighbourhoods within the old cities, but to a pattern far different from the old. Each redevelopment project should be a further exploration of the new patterns that we have, at least in part, evolved through our trials and demonstrations, from Radburn to Baldwin Hills Village. Redevelopment will be valueless unless each scheme is part of a co-ordinated process that will ultimately make the old cities into New Cities—modern cities. . .

—from 'Indications of the Form of the Future' the final Chapter in *Toward New Towns for America* by Clarence Stein

Shorter Notes and Reviews

LOCAL STUDY AND LOVE FOR THE PLACE

Whenever we get into conversation with Canadian or a Usanian on a train, we find him ready to talk about his home town. . . It may be a healthy sign, and in the line of progress, that pride in a city expressed by a stranger on a train is based on the prowess of a team, on vital and financial statistics, and area—uncontrolled by planning. There is, however, the pride that comes from knowledge of local history. Such a knowledge, if not acquired in school, will only rarely be acquired in later life. We get the impression that in few Canadian cities and towns is local history in the curriculum of the public schools. . .

We should like to interest the young Canadian, and the new Canadian, in history on the lower plane: the history of streets and parks, and even of buildings. That is the history that makes pride in one's city far more real and far more permanent than the pride which is based on statistics. It is a pride, too, that rushes to the defence of ancient names and venerable landmarks when they are in danger. In Toronto, and it must be the same elsewhere, both are in constant danger. In a city dedicated to private enterprise, the objects of private philanthropy are, curiously enough, the most vulnerable. During the war, the city found it easier to give away a park which it had received as a gift than to consider the purchase of an adjoining property which was the choice of the city's own planning board.

Only this month a Colonel Nasmith achieved headlines by suggesting that the only green space we have in a congested area be used for builders' houses. The fact

is forgotten by most that half the park was given to the city by Senator George W. Allan whose name it still bears. One would not worry about these things if we did not remember that only recently we had a mayor who suggested filling in a ravine to support a bridge.

Then there was the sad case of Ann Street; we hope the practice is not common in Canada of changing the name of a street in order to raise its social status. Without doubt, Ann is not what it used to be, but it was not improved by being called Granby. . . Ann Wood was the sister of Guy Carleton Wood, and her first husband was that Andrew McGill whose brother James founded McGill University. It was Bishop Strachan, her second husband, who deeded to the city the two streets we once knew as Ann and McGill, named after his wife. An ungrateful generation knowing nothing of history, and caring less, has dropped poor Ann in favour of a dissolute eighteenth century rake.

One can only wonder what may happen to the park which Mr. John Howard the architect gave to Toronto. . . This was mentioned frequently as ideal for wartime housing, and more recently for a school. It seems to us that if our children grew up with a love for their cities and towns that arose from a pride in their history, the philistine would get short shrift in the desecration of a park, the ravaging of a ravine, or the obliteration of a name.

—from an editorial in the *Journal of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada*, March 1952.

A MODEL FOR RECREATION SURVEYS*

Community organizers, community planners, and others concerned with social action will gain an appreciation of a method of surveying which has been too infrequently demonstrated in Canada by a careful reading of Professor Hendry's report on the *Capital District Recreation Planning Survey*. The report successfully relates the contributions and thinking of lay participants and policy-makers, professional recreationists and social researchers.

There appears to be a reluctance in Canada to undertake surveys and similar information gathering techniques since, as Professor Hendry notes, the project is met with a cry that surveys " . . . always aim at the moon (and)

end up with a demand for more money". The wide circulation of this report may do much to demonstrate the values of such undertakings.

The project was financed by the Ottawa Lions Club and actively supported by the Council of Social Agencies, Recreation Commission, Community Centres and numerous civic groups. Its well-considered recommendations constitute a plan for the re-organization of recreation programs in Ottawa, and for their future orderly development based on priorities, needs and gaps.

The survey was more of a professionally directed self-study of citizens and participants than an examination of

* *Capital District Recreation Planning Survey*; Hendry, C. E., et al, 172 Wellington Street, Ottawa 1952. (Mimeo) pp. 168. (\$2.00)

Note: Readers should request a copy of the preparatory booklet *Partners in Planning* which illustrates the method and principles of the survey in charts, chronological sequence, etc.

the situation by recreationists. A citizens' committee was set up to direct the effort, and had working committees as follows: Technical, Executive, and Publicity & Interpretation. This technique involved large numbers of taxpayers and program supporters in evaluating and planning for their own activities, and is a very effective method of achieving goals. Its products are the result of wide representation of community and individual interests; the project receives wide interpretation; and an understanding of basic principles is gained by many people who then take a personal interest in seeing that the conclusions are given serious consideration by authorities and organizations.

Of particular interest to community planners is the close relationship between the surveyors and the National Capital Planning Service—evidenced by the extensive use of material prepared by the Service, e.g., maps, layouts, definition of natural neighbourhoods, districts and areas,

etc., and the acceptance by all concerned that planning for recreation in this community must be on a regional basis.

The recommendations are well conceived, based on accepted principles and capable of execution. In addition to a good format and readable style, the report presents the required theory and philosophy with illustrations and examples understandable by the 'Consumers'.

This report should prove to be of value to all community planners as an example of community organization techniques, survey methods, and as a text in community recreation planning. Professor Hendry, the late Miss I. McLuggan, and, in particular, the many citizens who helped in this task are to be complimented on their work. It is to be hoped that future recreation developments in Ottawa will be predicated on this survey.

Winnipeg Welfare Council

MYLES MACDONALD

WEST EUROPEAN CITIES*

It is the geographer's function, says Dickinson, to study "... the differentiations and associations of the facts and phenomena of the earth's surface ... in the countryside, the land itself; but in the urban area, which is an exclusively man-made habitat, the buildings in which the people live and work ... to investigate those features of the urban habitat that are areally repetitive and significant ... the physical structure of the settlement; the mode of grouping of its buildings and streets; the process which determines this structure; the social and economic character of the community; the stage in the historical development of the settlement. ..." Busy fellows, these geographers, as one can plainly see.

The book is divided into two parts. The first part is a summary of other studies made of various sections of the West European community. We find first, 'The Towns of Central Sweden', based on *The Towns of Malarsen in Sweden; a study in Urban Morphology*, by J. Leighley. Mr. Leighley is interested in the physical layout of a group of trading villages which developed along the forested shore of the Baltic in the early middle ages and became outposts of the Hanseatic League. Next we have 'The Small Historic Town in France' based on a series of studies in *La Vie Urbaine* of French provincial capitals as they developed in medieval and renaissance times. We come back to France later with 'The Structure of the French City' and again in another chapter on Paris. This reader finds difficulty working through these and many other summaries of studies done by

different authors with different interests, when the material is never related by Mr. Dickinson.

The book's second part is a rather more historical approach to the physical development of West European cities from the medieval period to the present day. Less than a third of this part deals with the last hundred years. There are a number of excellent photographs and sketch plans of medieval and renaissance towns and cities; but it is hard to find the significant story. What one gets is an illustrated report of what American and European urban geographers have been up to during the last thirty years—some of them touching on political history, some on sociology, some on economic change and development.

It is certainly of great value to have studies of city development which concentrate on physical layout; but if the physical layout is to be interpreted in terms of the life and times in which it developed, the reader may readily baulk at being presented with the whole of Western Europe at a single serving. And if it is to be of value to the city planner of the present day, as the author suggests it is, the work of the urban geographer should also include a look at the intense distortions of natural geography which the modern industrial city produces.

WILLIAM S. GOULDING

Toronto

* *The West European City* by Robert E. Dickinson. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1951. (In Canada, British Book Service, 263 Adelaide West, Toronto 1. Price \$8.70 postpaid)



Out of season? Only if one forgets that Montreal, Toronto and Ottawa have just finished spending five million dollars doing this—and that Canada as a whole spent perhaps ten times as much last winter in the same way. Now is the time to detail streets so that clearing equipment can work, snow piles will be out of the way, melting and drainage can be dealt with in the seasons ahead.

Hors de propos? Oui, si l'on oublie que Montréal, Toronto et Ottawa viennent de dépenser cinq millions de dollars à une telle tâche—et que, par tout le Canada, il s'est probablement dépensé dix fois ce montant à la même fin. Ne devrait-on pas songer dès maintenant à tracer les rues de telle sorte que le matériel de déblaiement puisse fonctionner facilement?

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